



**Town of Mansfield
Agenda Item Summary**

To: Town Council
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager *MWH*
CC: Maria Capriola, Assistant Town Manager; Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development; Curt Vincente, Director of Parks and Recreation
Date: May 12, 2014
Re: Neighborhood Assistance Act Programs

Subject Matter/Background

The Connecticut Department of Revenue Services has issued a solicitation for program applications for the 2014 Neighborhood Assistance Act Program. This program provides funding for community programs conducted by either a municipal government or tax exempt agency through a corporation tax credit to businesses that make cash contributions to the town. The community program must be approved by both the municipal agency and the Department of Revenue Services. Businesses can receive a Connecticut Tax Credit for their contributions to municipal programs that are approved by the Department of Revenue Services. The amount of the tax credit is determined by the type of project in which the business invests. The minimum investment required is \$250; the maximum investment for a business in any calendar year is \$150,000.

Eligible Programs

The following types of projects and community programs would be eligible for funding through the Neighborhood Assistance Act:

- *Energy Conservation Projects* (Tax Credit of 100% of cash invested) including projects to promote energy conservation that are directed toward properties occupied by low-income persons or properties owned or occupied by charitable organizations, foundations, trusts or other entities.
- *Community Programs* (Tax Credit of 60% of cash invested) including programs that provide community-based alcoholism prevention or treatment programs; neighborhood assistance; job training; education; community services; crime prevention; construction or rehabilitation of dwelling units for families of low and moderate income in the state; funding for open space acquisitions; child day care facilities (must be primarily for children of employees of the sponsoring business); and any other program that serves persons at least 75% of whom are at an income level not exceeding 150% of the poverty level for the preceding year.

In 2013, the Town submitted applications for the four projects listed below. Two of the projects have received funding in past years: the water harvesting project received funding in both 2012 and 2013 and the energy efficiency assistance project received funding in 2012.

- *Water Harvesting at Mansfield Community Center.* This project includes installation of a system to collect, filter, store and re-use rainwater from building roof areas. This project will make the facility more sustainable by reducing or eliminating the need for water from the local water supply system (UCONN water system managed by Connecticut Water). Based on conversations with the Department of Revenue Services, we believe this project could qualify for the 100% tax credit for energy conservation programs. (2012 Funding: \$12,894.71; 2013 Funding: \$3,917.71)
- *Energy Efficiency Assistance for Low-Moderate Income Homeowners.* This project would fund energy efficiency improvements as part of the Town's existing housing rehabilitation program to help reduce energy costs for low and moderate income homeowners. The funds from the Neighborhood Assistance Act would be used to supplement the housing rehabilitation funds to upgrade equipment and materials to more energy efficient models, up to an additional \$10,000 per home. As an energy efficiency project, this program would qualify for a 100% tax credit. (2012 Funding: \$12,894.71)
- *Playground Construction at Mansfield Community Center.* The community playground is planned to be centrally located near downtown, Town Hall and the Community Center, and to provide an accessible playscape for kids and families of all ages and abilities. The playground will be designed and built from raw materials to reflect our unique community, and will use volunteer labor during construction.
- *Preservation of Agricultural Land.* The Town has actively worked since the 1970s to preserve open space, including agricultural lands for future generations. Farms are a rich part of our history and a key contributor to the rural character enjoyed by Mansfield residents. Funds received for this program would be used for agricultural land preservation programs, including purchase of development rights and agricultural land acquisition.

Pursuant to program guidelines, we are required to hold a public hearing regarding proposed program applications and the Town Council must vote to approve the programs prior to application. As part of the public hearing, staff will present information on the four projects noted above. After the public hearing, the Council will need to decide which projects, if any, should be submitted for the 2014 program.

Additional projects could also be identified through the public hearing by members of the community as well as local non-profit organizations. A solicitation was sent out to local non-profits on May 1st, asking for submission of proposed projects by May 30, 2014 for consideration at a June 9, 2014 public hearing.

Timeline

Applications for municipal programs must be submitted to the Department of Revenue Services by July 1, 2014. The Department will issue a list of approved programs by September 1, 2014. Businesses interested in funding any of the approved programs must submit a Neighborhood Assistance Business Act Application to the Department of Revenue Services between September 15 and October 1, 2014.

Financial Impact

The financial impact would depend on the program. Draft project applications including budgets identifying funding sources and expenses for each project will be presented at the public hearing.

Legal Review

No legal review is required at this time.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Council schedule a public hearing for June 9, 2014 to receive public comment regarding potential program applications for the Neighborhood Assistance Program.

If the Town Council agrees with this recommendation, the following motion is in order:

Move, to schedule a public hearing for 7:30 PM at the Town Council's regular meeting on June 9, 2014, to solicit public comment regarding potential program applications to the Neighborhood Assistance Program.

Attachments

1) Neighborhood Assistance Act Information Sheet



25 Sigourney Street
Hartford CT 06106-5032

INFORMATIONAL PUBLICATION

The Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program

Purpose: This Informational Publication explains the Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Tax Credit Program

Effective Date: upon issuance.

Statutory Authority: Conn. Gen. Stat. §12-630aa et. seq.

Definitions: For purposes of the NAA tax credit program:

Business firm means any business entity authorized to do business in the state and subject to the tax due under the provisions of Chapter 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212 or 213a. For purposes of a business entity subject to the provisions of Chapter 213a, the tax credit earned by such entity may be used by the members or partners of such entity that are subject to the Corporation Business tax under Chapter 208.

Donation of money to an open space acquisition fund means money contributed to an open space acquisition fund of any political subdivision of the state or any nonprofit land conservation organization.

The money must be used for the purchase of land, interest in land, or permanent conservation restriction on land to be permanently preserved as protected open space.

Energy conservation projects means programs to promote energy conservation that are directed toward properties where at least 75% of occupants are at an income level not exceeding 150% of the poverty level for the year immediately preceding the year during which the tax credit is to be granted or at properties owned or occupied by charitable corporations, foundations, trusts, or other entities. Such projects include, but are not limited to:

- Energy conserving modification or replacement of windows and doors;
- Caulking and weather-stripping;
- Insulation;
- Automatic energy control systems;

- Hot water systems;
- Equipment required to operate variable steam, hydraulic, and ventilating systems;
- Replacement of burners, furnaces, or boilers;
- Electrical or mechanical furnace ignition systems; or
- Replacement or modification of lighting fixtures.

The Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program: The NAA Tax Credit Program provides a tax credit to business firms that make cash investments in qualifying community programs conducted by tax exempt or municipal agencies. Such tax credit may be applied against the taxes due under the provisions of chapter 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, or 212. The community programs must be approved by both the municipality in which the programs are conducted and by the Department of Revenue Services (DRS).

Community Programs That Qualify for the NAA Tax Credit Program: Listed below are examples of the types of programs that qualify for the NAA tax credit and the amount of the available credit.

A tax credit equal to 100% of the cash invested is available to business firms that invest in energy conservation projects.

A tax credit equal to 60% of the cash invested is available to business firms that invest in programs that provide:

- Neighborhood assistance;
- Job training;
- Education;
- Community services;
- Crime prevention;
- Construction or rehabilitation of dwelling units for families of low and moderate income in the state;
- Donation of money to an open space acquisition fund;
- Child day care facilities;
- Child care services;

- Employment and training programs directed at handicapped persons;
- Employment and training programs for unemployed workers who are 50 years of age or older;
- Education and employment training programs for recipients in the temporary family assistance program;
- Community-based alcoholism prevention or treatment; or
- Any other program which serves a group of individuals where at least 75% of the individuals are at an income not exceeding 150% of the poverty level for the year immediately preceding the year during which the tax credit is to be granted.

Obtaining Approval for the NAA Tax Credit Program:

Tax-exempt entities and municipal agencies desiring to obtain benefits under the NAA must complete **Form NAA-01, Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Proposal**, Parts I, II, and III and submit the form to the municipal agency overseeing the implementation of the proposal. The overseeing municipal agency then completes Part IV of Form NAA-01 and submits the form to DRS on or before July 1 of each year. Prior to submitting Form NAA-01 to DRS, each municipality must hold a public hearing on all program applications. The governing body of the municipality must vote to approve the programs. Copies of the public hearing notice and minutes of the meeting approving the programs must be submitted by the municipality to DRS with the approved program proposals.

Limits on the Amount of Contributions That May Be Made or on the Amount of Tax Credit Available: The NAA Tax Credit Program has several statutory limits which must be observed, including the following:

- A business firm is limited to receiving \$150,000 in tax credits annually; however, the amount of tax credit allowed any business firm for investments in child day care facilities for any income year may not exceed \$50,000.
- The minimum contribution on which a tax credit can be granted is \$250.
- Any organization conducting a program or programs eligible for funding under the NAA is limited to receiving an aggregate of \$150,000 of funding for any program or programs for any fiscal year.

- The total amount of all tax credits allowed in any fiscal year is \$5 million, which, if exceeded, results in prorating the approved tax credits among the approved organizations.
- Effective with the 2011 NAA program, the total charitable contributions of the contributing business firm does not need to equal or exceed its prior year's charitable contributions in order to be eligible for the tax credit.

Business Applications Deadlines: Each business firm requesting a tax credit under the NAA Tax Credit Program must complete a separate **Form NAA-02, Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA) Business Application**, for each program it wishes to sponsor. Form NAA-02 must have an original signature and be mailed or hand-delivered to DRS on or after September 15 but not later than October 1 of each year.

Claiming the Tax Credit: DRS issues an NAA program approval letter to business firms that make cash investments in qualified community programs. The letter indicates the tax credit amount that may be claimed on the applicable business tax return. The tax credit amount must also be entered on **Form CT-1120K, Business Tax Credit Summary**, and/or **Form CT-207K, Insurance/Health Care Tax Credit Schedule**.

Carry Back Provisions: The amount of tax credit that is not taken on the tax return of a business firm for the income year beginning during the calendar year in which the program proposal was approved may be carried back to the two immediately preceding income years (beginning with the earlier of the years). No carry forward is allowed.

Obtaining Additional Information: Direct inquiries to:

Department of Revenue Services
 State of Connecticut
 Research Unit
 25 Sigourney St Ste 2
 Hartford CT 06106

Call: 860-297-5687

Email: DRS.TaxResearch@po.state.ct.us

Effect on Other Documents: Informational Publication 2010(22), The Connecticut Neighborhood Assistance Act Tax Credit Program, is superseded and may not be relied upon after the date of issuance of this Publication.

Effect of This Document: An Informational Publication issued by DRS addresses frequently asked questions about a current position, policy, or practice, usually in a less technical question and answer format.

Related Forms and Publications: Request the most recent edition of the following forms: **Form NAA-01**, *Neighborhood Assistance Act Program Proposal*, and **Form NAA-02**, *Neighborhood Assistance Act Business Application*.

For Further Information: Call DRS during business hours, Monday through Friday:

- 1-800-382-9463 (Connecticut calls outside the Greater Hartford calling area only); or
- 860-297-5962 (from anywhere).

TTY, TDD, and Text Telephone users only may transmit inquiries anytime by calling 860-297-4911.

Forms and Publications: Visit the DRS website at www.ct.gov/DRS to download and print Connecticut tax forms and publications.

Paperless Filing/Payment Methods (fast, easy, free, and confidential):

Business and individual taxpayers can use the **Taxpayer Service Center (TSC)** at www.ct.gov/TSC to file a variety of tax returns, update account information, and make payments online.

File Electronically: You can choose first-time filer information and filing assistance or log directly into the **TSC** to file returns and pay taxes.

Pay Electronically: You can pay taxes for tax returns that cannot be filed through the **TSC**. Log in and select the *Make Payment Only* option. Designate a payment date up to the due date of the tax and mail a paper return to complete the filing process.

DRS E-Alerts Service: Get connected to the latest news from DRS. Receive notification by email of changes to legislation, policies, and procedures. **DRS E-Alerts** provide information for employer's withholding tax, News – Press Releases, and Top 100 Delinquency List. Visit the DRS website at www.ct.gov/DRS and select *Sign up for e-alerts* under *How Do I?* on the gold navigation bar..